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ABSTRACT

A study compared Ph.D. programs in communication in the Central States Region. Fourteen colleges and universities responded to a 17-item questionnaire. Results indicated: (1) there were half as many Ph.D. as Masters degree students; (2) half of the Ph.D. students were residents of the state in which they attended school; (3) the average ratio of students to faculty was 3 to 1; (4) the average time for completing the Ph.D. was 5 years; (5) the average time limit for completion of the degree was 6.6 years; (6) the average required grade point average was a B, and most graduates averaged an A-; (7) 60% of the Ph.D. students had teaching assistantships available to them, the average assistantship lasted 3.5 years and the average stipend was $7,995.54 per year; (8) most assistantships were in research, forensics, and teaching; (9) the average cost per credit hour was $114.33; (10) the areas of concentration offered in Ph.D. programs included research, education, forensics, rhetoric, interpersonal, intercultural, organizational, and mass communication; and (11) most Ph.D. students go on to teach at the college level. (A tabulation of questionnaire results is attached.) (PRA)

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PH.D PROGRAMS IN THE CENTRAL STATES COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS 1991

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A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF PH.D PROGRAMS IN THE CENTRAL STATES COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION

The importance of communication in today's world is fast becoming recognized by the academic community. Communication programs are growing and changing to accomodate that awareness. This study seeks to provide information to potential Ph.D students, instructors, heads of departments, deans and college administrators through a quantitative analysis of Ph.D programs in the Central States Region.

This study does not rate the Ph.D programs. Rather, it provides specific information to those concerned. The information generated by this study may be used in comparison of schools and Ph.D programs.

METHOD

The survey included twenty-four colleges and universities in the Central States Region. A questionnaire containing seventeen questions was sent out to the twenty-four schools in the study group. Tabulation was based on the return of the questionnaire and the totaling of the specific numbers as they applied to each question. The totals were then averaged or put into percentiles when applicable.

RETURN RATE

Seventeen of the twenty-four schools responded to the survey. Of those respondants, three indicated that they do not have Ph.D programs at this time. The remaining fourteen schools completed the questionnaire.

RESULTS/INTERPRETATION

The results of each question will be presented in the order in which it appears on the questionnaire. A brief analysis of those results will be included where neccesary. Some of the analysis may contain comparisons to a similar survey conducted by graduate students at Kearney State College in 1988. The 1988 study was a quantitative analysis of Master's programs in the Central States Region.

QUESTION 1

There were 14 responses completed on the questionnaires. The total number of estimated Ph.D students is 533. An average of 38(38.07) students per institution. This figure shows that there are about half as many Ph.D students as there are Masters degree students.

QUESTION 2

The 14 responses to #2 indicated that about 214 of currently enrolled Ph.D students are residents of the state in which they attend school. This averages out to 19(19.45) resident students per insitution.

When compared to the figures in #1 we see that roughly half of the Ph.D. students are residents. The survey of Masters students showed a residency rate of about 78%, so the figures seem to indicate that Ph.D students are more mobile. This trend is probably a result of students seeking a Ph.D program that is conducive to their specific needs and a willingness to travel greater distances to find it. There are fewer Ph.D programs than Masters programs to choose from, so finding the right one may be more difficult.

QUESTION 3

The number of faculty designated to instruct Ph.D level courses totaled 184 for the 14 responding institions, an average of 13(13.14) faculty per institution. This would average out to about a 3 to 1 ratio of students to faculty. This very low ratio of students to faculty is probably somewhat misleading due to the fact that instructors may have classes that combine Ph.D and Masters students.

QUESTION 4&5

The approximate time it takes a student to complete the coursework/ABD averaged 3.1 years and an additional 2(1.96) years to complete the dissertation. A student can expect the Ph.D program to take approximately five years to completion.

QUESTION 6&7

All 14 of the institutions responding indicated that there is

a time limit to complete the Ph.D program once a student has started. The average time limit is 6.6 years. Those students needing more more time must make special arrangements with the institution. The completion rate of students in Ph.D programs is 76.42% or three quarters of the students. This number bodes well for potential Ph.D students.

QUESTION 8&9

The minimum grade point average that a Ph.D student must maintain averaged out to a B. Two of the responding institutions indicated B-, 10 institutions indicated B, and two indicated A-. The average grade point average for graduating Ph.D students is A-. This means that, on the average, Ph.D students don't have a problem meeting the minimum grade point average.

QUESTION 10&11&12

The number of teaching assistantships offered per year for the 14 responding institutions totalled about 325 or 23 per institution. When compared to question #1, this indicates that 60% of Ph.D students have teaching assistantships available to them. The average assistantship lasts for 3.5 years and the average stipend per assistantship is $7995.54 per year.

QUESTION 13

The areas of communication that the assistanships cover

included 9 research or 64.28% of institutions, 9 forensics or 64.28% of institutions, 14 teaching or all institutions, and 1 other or 7.14 of institutions. The "other" assistantship was titled Communication Research Center.

QUESTION 14

Only 9 institutions responded to the question of average cost per credit hour per Ph.D course. That average was $114.33 per credit hour. The low response on this question may be due to the fact that the faculty didn't know or, if the tuition was high, mabey didn't want to discourage anyone from checking out their program. Another factor may be that 60% of students don't pay tuition because of assistantships.

QUESTION 15

The average cost of books was not responded to by a significant number of institutions and therefore will not be discussed.

QUESTION 16

The areas of concentration offered in Ph.D programs included 6 research, 4 education, 2 forensics, 9 rhetoric, 11 interpersonal, 4 intercultural, 11 organizational, 7 mass communication, 0 theatre, 1 political communication, 1 public affairs, 1 TV studies, 1 performance, 1 femenism, 1 telecommunication, 1 cultural studies, and 1 philosophies of

communication.

There is a definite emphasis on the areas of interpersonal communication and organizational communication indicating that the major interest in communication studies at this time is in areas where application is the emphasis. The rising awareness of the importance of good communication skills in the work force is definitly evident in these figures. It is also interesting to note some of the "new" areas of concentration in Ph.D programs, such as, TV studies, femenism, and cultural studies. These "new" areas indicate a willingness of the field to expand with the growing need for specialists in these areas.

It is also interesting to note that the major areas where assistantships are offered, research, forensics, and teaching, are low in number of concentrations offered. This indicates that students are accepting assistantships in areas other that their specific area of concentration.

QUESTION 17

The number of Ph.D students who go on to teach at the college is high. The number who go on to teach at the high school level is low. This difference is probably due to the fact that high school teachers don't rely on obtaining a Ph.D for promotional purposes. Generally, a Masters degree is adequate for the high school level teacher.

Jeanne Gallagher

RESULTS

1. Approximate the number of currently enrolled students in the Speech/Communications Ph.D. program.

   14 replies 533 total 38.07 students per institution

2. Approximate the number of currently enrolled Ph.D. students who are residents of your state.

   14 replies 214 total 19.45 students per institution

3. Approximate the number of faculty designated to instruct Ph.D. level coursework.

   14 replies 184 total 13.14 faculty per institution

4. Approximate the time it takes a student to complete the Ph.D. coursework/A.B.D.

   14 replies 3.1 years average

5. Approximate the time it takes a graduate to complete their dissertation.

   14 replies 1.96 years

6. Is there a time limit to complete the Ph.D. degree?

   15 replies all yes 6.6 years average time limit

7. Approximate the percentage of students who obtain the Ph.D. degree once they have started the program.

   14 replies 76.42% completion

8. What is the minimum cummulative grade average a Ph.D. student must maintain?

   14 replies 2(B-) 10(B) 2(A-) B average

9. Approximate the average cummulative grade average of graduating Ph.D. students.

   14 replies A- average

10. How many teaching assistantships does your institution grant each year for the Ph.D. program?

14 replies low 9, high 50 22.9 average per institution

11. How long does the average assistantship last?

14 replies 11 3-years 3.5 years average

12. What is the average stipend per assistantship per year?

14 replies $7995.54 average

13. What areas do the assistanships cover?

14 replies

9(64.28%) research 9(64.28%) forensics 14(100%) teaching 1((7.14%)other Communication Research Center

14. What is the average cost per credit hour for Ph.D. courses?

9 replies $114.33 per credit hour

15. What is the average cost for books per Ph.D. course?

0 replies not able to compute

16. What areas of concentration do you offer in your program? Approximate number of students in each area of concentration.

13 replies

6	reasearch	1	other TV studies
4	education	1	other performance
2	forensics	1	other femenism
9	rhetoric	1	other telecomm
11	interpersonal	1	other cultural studies
4	intercultural	1	other philosophies of communication
11	organizational		
7	mass communication		
0	theatre		
1	other political communication		
1	other public affairs		

17. Approximate the number of students who go on to teach speech communications.

14 replies most college level few high school